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Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-14 ISO-00 AID-20 IO-14 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DPW-01 NIC-01 OMB-01

DRC-01 /167 W
---------- 092208
R 161140Z AUG 74
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7887
INFO AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMCONSUL CAN THO
AMCONSUL DANANG
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USDEL JEC PARIS
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 10864

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR VS IR
SUBJ: IRANIAN REFUTATION OF COMMUNIST POSITION ON ICCS ACTIVITY

1. SUMMARY: OVER PAST FEW WEEKS IRANIAN DELEGATION HAS BEEN CONDUCTING STRATEGY DESIGNED TO EXPOSE IN EMBARRASSING SPOTLIGHT THE REFUSAL OF POLISH AND HUNGARIAN DELEGATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN INVESTIGATIONS ON GROUNDS TPJMC IS NOT MEETING. THIS STRATEGY CULMINATED IN SESSION OF ICCS MILITARY COMMITTEE AUGUST 13, AT WHICH IRANIAN CHAIRMAN SPRANG PROPOSAL THAT ICCS PROCEED TO INVESTIGATE "PRG" COMPLAINTS. COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS, CAUGHT BY SURPRISE, WERE MANEUVERED INTO INSISTING THIS PROPOSAL, OSTENSIBLY FAVORABLE TO "PRG", BE STRICKEN FROM AGENDA. IRANIANS ARE CIRCULATINGVERBATIM MINUTES TO INTERESTED PARTIES.
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2. THE TWO COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS TO THE ICCS HAVE STATED THAT NO FORMAL ICCS INVESTIGATIONS CAN BE CARRIED OUT WHILE THE TPJMC IS NOT MEETING, ASSERTING THAT SUCH ICCS ACTIONS REQUIRE CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE ICCS AND TPJMC AND THAT, IN PARTICULAR, INVESTIGATIONS CAN BE CARRIED OUT ONLY AFTER A SAFETY GUARANTEE AND A LIAISON OFFICER HAVE BEEN PROVIDED BY EACH SOUTH VIETNAMESE PARTY. THE IRANIANS AND INDONESIANS HAD RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTED THE COMMUNIST CONDITIONS FOR FORMAL INVESTIGATIONS IN ORDER TO GET THEM STARTED, ONLY TO HAVE THE TPJMC IMPASSE RAISED BY THE COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS AS ANOTHER PROCEDURAL ROADBLOCK. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE INDONESIANS AND IRANIANS HAVE CONTINUED TO CARRY OUT "OBSERVATIONS" OF RVN COMPLAINTS WHEN FEASIBLE, FOR WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN STRONGLY CRITICIZED BY THE COMMUNISTS.

3. IN JULY THE IRANIAN DELEGATION BEGAN QUIETLY TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO EXPOSE IN AN EMBARRASSING SPOTLIGHT THE REFUSAL OF THE COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN INVESTIGATIONS. SINCE THE "PRG" REPRESENTATIVES TO THE TPJMC ARE NOT DEPLOYED OUTSIDE SAIGON, ALL "PRG" COMPLAINTS AND INVESTIGATION REQUESTS ARE CONVEYED TO ICCS HEADQUARTERS IN SAIGON. IRDEL ACCUMULATED ALL "PRG" REQUESTS FOR INVESTIGATION RECEIVED OVER PAST FEW MONTHS AND FORWARDED THE PERTINENT REQUESTS TO THE IRANIAN COMMANDER IN EACH RESPECTIVE REGION. IRDEL INSTRUCTED EACH IRANIAN REGIONAL COMMANDER TO PROPOSE AT REGIONAL LEVEL MEETINGS THAT ICCS FIELD TEAMS BEGIN CARRYING OUT INVESTIGATIONS OF "PRG" COMPLAINTS. THE REGIONAL IRDEL CHIEFS WERE INSTRUCTED TO STATE THAT THE IRDEL, IN COM-PLIANCE WITH ITS COMMITMENTS UNDER THE PARIS AGREEMENT, HAS TRIED TO INVESTIGATE OR MAKE NATIONAL OBSERVATIONS OF INCIDENTS REPORTED BY THE RVN AND WISHES, AS AN UNBIASED OBSERVER, TO DO THE SAME FOR "PRG" COMPLAINTS. AS IN CASES INVOLVING THE RVN, THE IRDEL WOULD REQUEST SECURITY GUARANTEES AND AN ESCORT OFFICER FROM BOTH PARTIES BUT WOULD BE WILLING TO INITIATE AN INVESTIGATION OR A NATIONAL OBSERVATION WITH ONLY A ONE-PARTY SAFETY GUARANTEE AND ESCORT OFFICER.

4. AS EXPECTED, THE COMMUNIST REGIONAL COMMANDERS WERE TAKEN ABACK BY THE IRANIAN PROPOSAL AND AFTER INITIAL CONFUSION OBJECTED SO THAT THE IRANIAN PROPOSAL IN EACH CASE WAS REFERRED BACK TO THE ICCS MILITARY COMMITTEE IN SAIGON. AS OF AUGUST 1 IRAN ASSUMED CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE FOR THE MONTH, ENTITLING CONFIDENTIAL

IRDEL TO DRAFT PROPOSED AGENDA. AFTER CAREFULLY DRAWING UP POSITION PAPERS IN ADVANCE, SHORTLY BEFORE THE MIL COM SESSION SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 13 COMMENDED, IRDEL DISTRIBUTED DRAFT PROPOSED AGENDA WHOSE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE ITEM WAS PHRASED AS FOLLOWS: "CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE REGIONS CONCERNING THE REQUEST OF THE IRANIAN DELEGATION REGARDING ITS READINESS TO CONSIDER AND CARRY OUT INVESTIGATION OR OBSERVATION OF PRG/RSVN COMPLAINTS ON EQUAL BASIS".

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5. EFFECT OF THIS MOVE ON COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS WAS IMMEDIATE.
BEFORE SESSION OPENED, COMMUNIST DEL POLITICAL OFFICERS HASTENED
TO OFFICE OF THEIR IRANIAN COUNTERPARTS TO ASK, "WHAT ARE YOU DOING,

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAIGON 10864

WHY ARE YOU RAISING SUCH A DELICATE SUBJECT AT A ROUTINE MIL COM
SESSION," ETC.

6. IRANIAN CHAIRMAN PROCEEDED TO OPEN SESSION BY ASKING FOR
ADOPTION OF PROPOSED AGENDA. HUNGARIAN IMMEDIATELY EXPRESSED SUR-
PRISE AND OBJECTION, STATING ANY IMPORTANT OR CONTROVERSIAL ITEM
SHOULD BE SUBJECT OF INFORMAL CONSULTATION BEFORE IT PLACED ON
DRAFT AGENDA. IRANIAN EXPLAINED IRAN TRYING TO FULFILL ITS TASKS
VIS-A-VIS PARIS AGREEMENT IMPARTIALLY, HAS ACCEPTED "PRG" COMPLAINTS,
AND SINCE "PRG" NOT DEPLOYED TO REGIONS, REFERRED THESE COMPLAINTS

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TO THE REGIONS WHICH UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO REFER THEM TO THE MIL COM. POLE SUPPORTED HUNGARIAN OBJECTION, AND RE-STATED COMMUNIST POSITION ICCS CANNOT CONDUCT INVESTIGATION WITHOUT CLOSE COOPERATION OF BOTH PARTIES TO TPJMC. HE CLAIMED THAT DURING CONSULTATIONS
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BETWEEN HEADS OF DELEGATIONS AT END OF JUNE "UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT" WAS REACHED THAT UNTIL TPJMC RESUMES ITS ACTIVITIES ICCS CANNOT UNDERTAKE ITS TASK.

7. IRANIAN THEN GAVE PREPARED POSITION STATEMENT THAT "THE PERFORMING OF THE MANDATORY TASK OF THE COMMISSION IS NOT VIOLATING THE AGREEMENT. IN ADDITION, THE RESPOSIBILITY OF THE ICCS IS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE JMC. THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMISSION IS THE SUPERVISION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT. THEREFORE, AT THE TIME WHEN ANIMOSITY BETWEEN THE PARTIES IS RISING, IT IS THE DUTY OF THE COMMISSION TO ASSIST THE TWO PARTIES TO LESSENING CONFRONTATION AND ASK THE TWO PARTIES TO IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENT. WHILE ON THE OTHER HAND THE COMMISSION'S INACTION WOULD BE A GREEN LIGHT FOR THE PARTIES CONCERNED TO FIGHTING AND VIOLATING THE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENTS. THE INACTIVITY OF THE JMC SHOULD NOT PREVENT THE COMMISSION FROM CARRYING OUT ITS FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. ON THE CONTRARY, IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE ITS AIM, THE COMMISSION SHOULD CARRY OUT ITS FUNCTIONS AS STIPULATED BY THE AGREEMENT AND URGE THE TWO PARTIES TO RECONCILE THEIR DIFFERENCES PEACEFULLY."

8. HUNGARIAN SUPPORTED POLE, STATING THAT ICCS AMBASSADORS HAD "REACHED A CERTAIN AGREEMENT ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY AND LIMITATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ICCS UNTIL THESE PROBLEMS WITHIN THE TPJMC CAN BE SETTLED", AND THAT MIL COM CAN ACT ONLY UPON DECISION OF THE PLENARY. IRANIAN, AGAIN ON BASIS OF PRE-PREPARED STATEMENT, NOTED MIL COM IS STILL BOUND BY PLENARY DECISION FOUR MONTHS AGO IN ACCORDANCE WITH WHICH MIL COM REQUESTED BOTH PARTIES TO PROVIDE SAFETY GUARANTEES AND LIAISON OFFICERS. WHAT IRANDEL PROPOSES IS THAT ICCS AGAIN WRITE "PRG" REQUESTING SAFETY GUARANTEE AND LIAISON OFFICERS FOR INVESTIGATIONS. IRANIAN CALLED ATTENTION TO DEADLOCKED BACKLOG OF 500 COMPLAINTS, AND STATED, "EVEN IF THE TPJMC IS NOT ACTIVE, WE CAN ACTUALLY START WORKING AT THESE LEFT-OVER COMPLAINTS TO CLEAR THEM OUT, TO BE READY, TO BE UP-TO-DATE. WHEN THE JMC STARTS ITS WORK WE WILL BE ABLE TO CARRY OUT DAILY ANY ROUTINE WORK CONCERNING INVESTIGATIONS AND OBSERVATION".

9. AT THIS POINT POLE AND HUNGARIAN INSISTED THAT ITEM BE STRUCK FROM THE AGENDA. IRANIAN, HAVING SUCCEEDED IN INSERTING HIS SUBSTANTIVE POSITION INTO THE RECORD, READILY AGREED AND CLOSED THE SESSION.
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10. IT IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT WHILE MIL COM UNLIKE ICCS PLENARY DOES NOT KEEP VERBATIM OFFICIAL MINUTES OF ITS SESSIONS, IRANIANS HAVE FOR SOME TIME KEPT THEIR OWN VERBATIM MINUTES OF MIL COM SESSIONS WHICH THEY DISTRIBUTE AFTER SESSIONS AS UNILATERAL IRANIAN DOCUMENT. THEY ARE THUS IN CONTROL OF BOTH TEXT AND DISTRIBUTION OF THESE MINUTES. THE FOREGOING ACCOUNT AND QUOTATIONS ARE FROM THE FINAL IRANIAN DRAFT BEING CIRCULATED WITHIN ICCS FOR COMMENT. THE IRANIANS CAN BE EXPECTED TO GIVE A COPY TO THEIR GVN LIAISON OFFICER. THE EFFECT OF THE IRANIAN POSITION STATEMENTS WILL DEPEND UPON HOW AND TO WHOM THESE MINUTES ARE DISTRIBUTED. ANYONE READING THEM CAN SEE THAT, WHEN PRESENTED WITH THE IRANIAN CONTENTION, TACITLY SUPPORTED
BY THE INDONESIANS, THAT THE ICCS IS OBLIGED TO CONTINUE ITS ACTIVITY DESPITE THE TPJMC IMPASSE, THE COMMUNISTS COULD NOT REFUTE THE CONTENTION BUT HAD TO RELY ON A PREVIOUS COMMUNIST VETO IN UNRECORDED CONSULTATIONS AND INSIST ON STOPPING THE DISCUSSION.
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